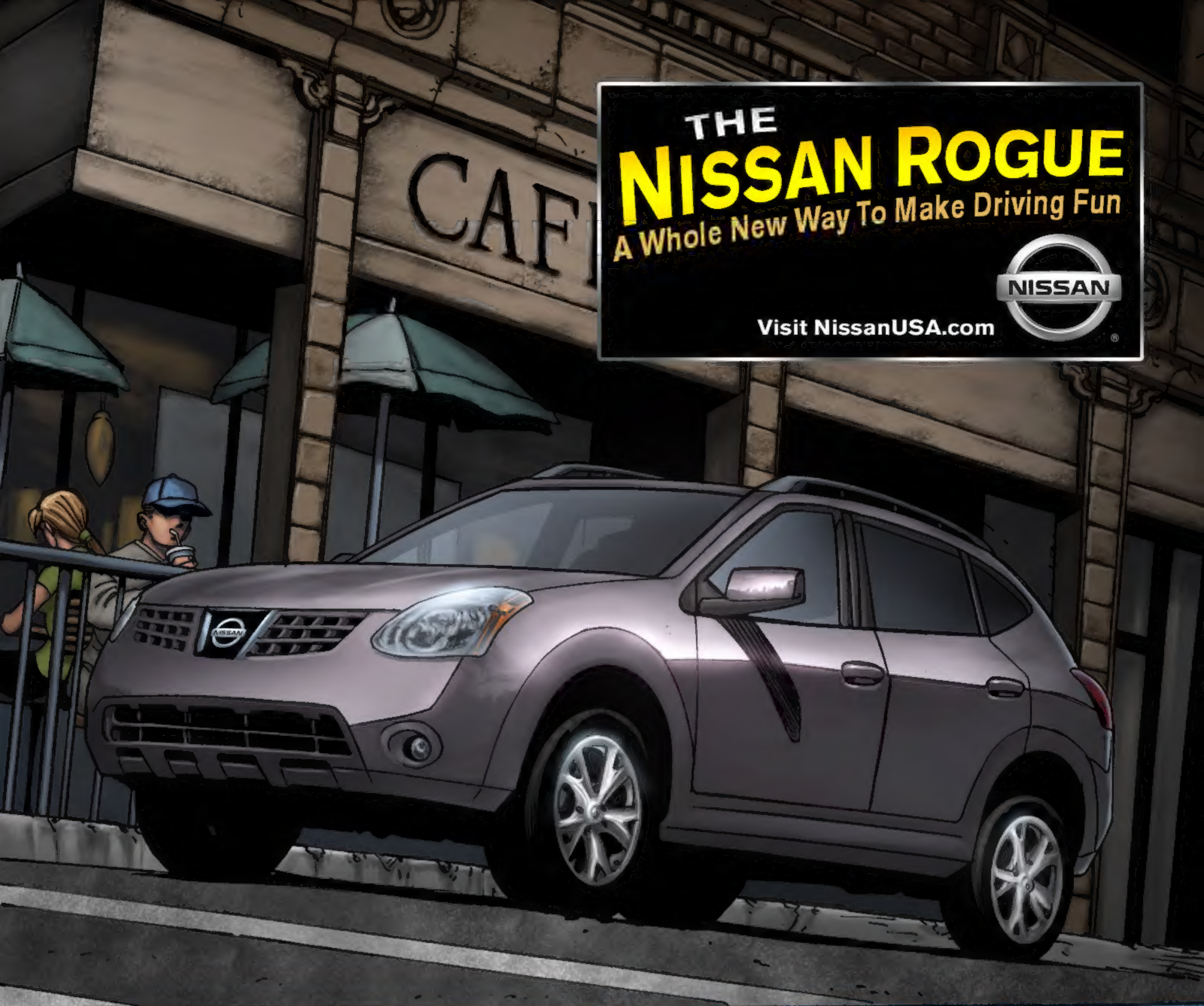


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HEROES

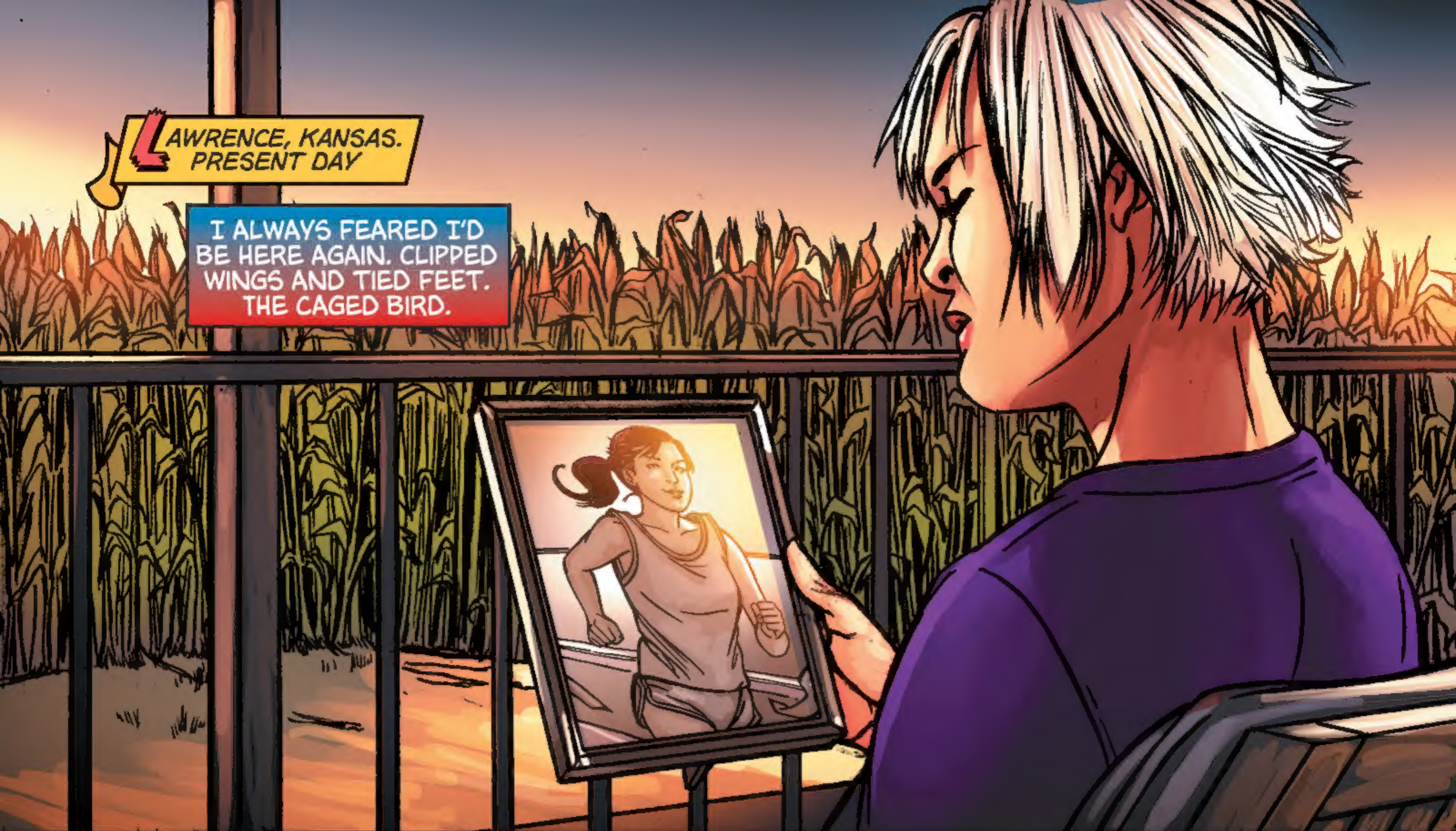
CHAPTER 113

THE CAGED BIRD

Daphne's life grinds to a halt when a second eclipse leaves her powerless and devastated; trapped in a place she never wished to return.

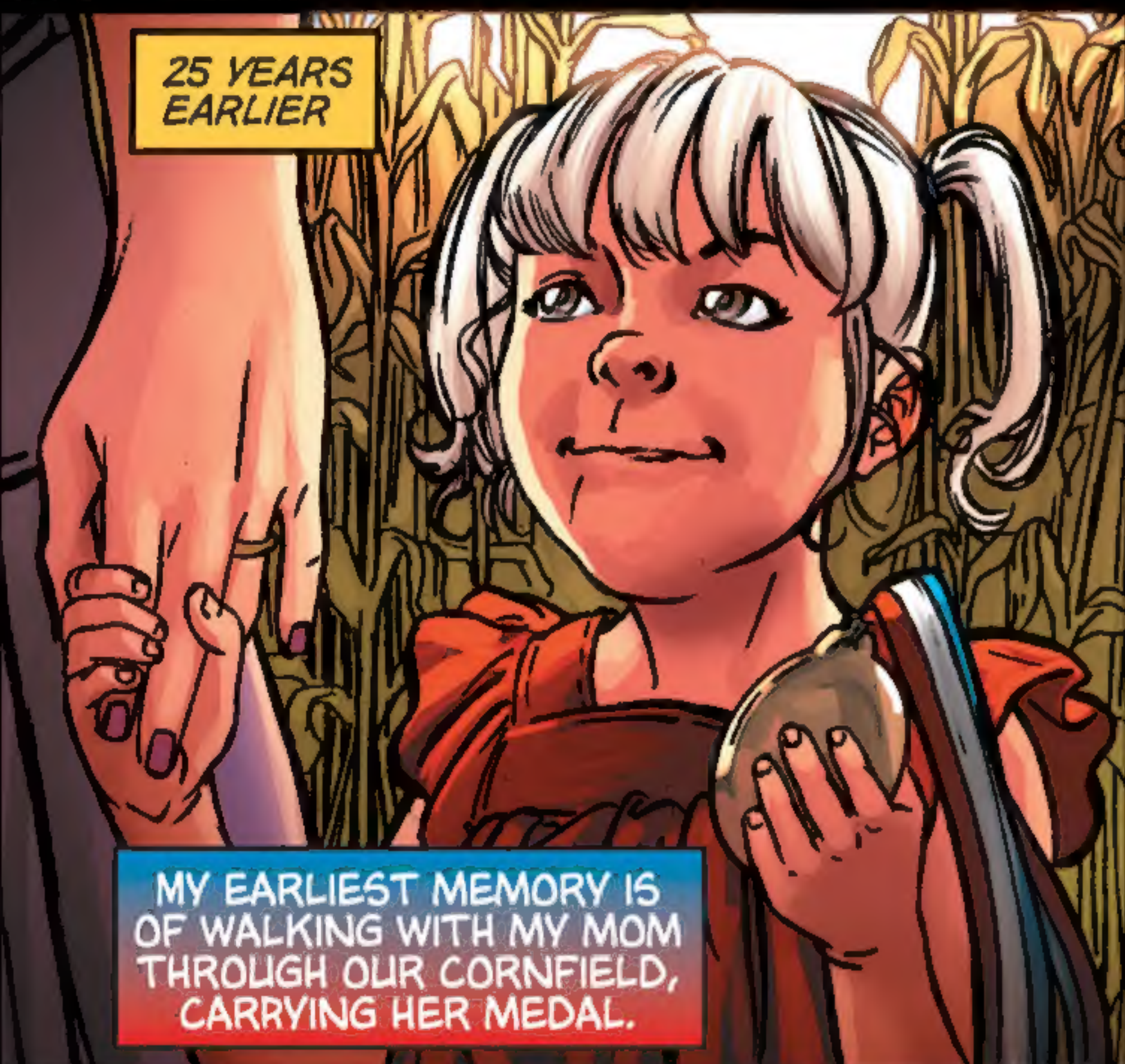
LAWRENCE, KANSAS.
PRESENT DAY

I ALWAYS FEARED I'D
BE HERE AGAIN. CLIPPED
WINGS AND TIED FEET.
THE CAGED BIRD.

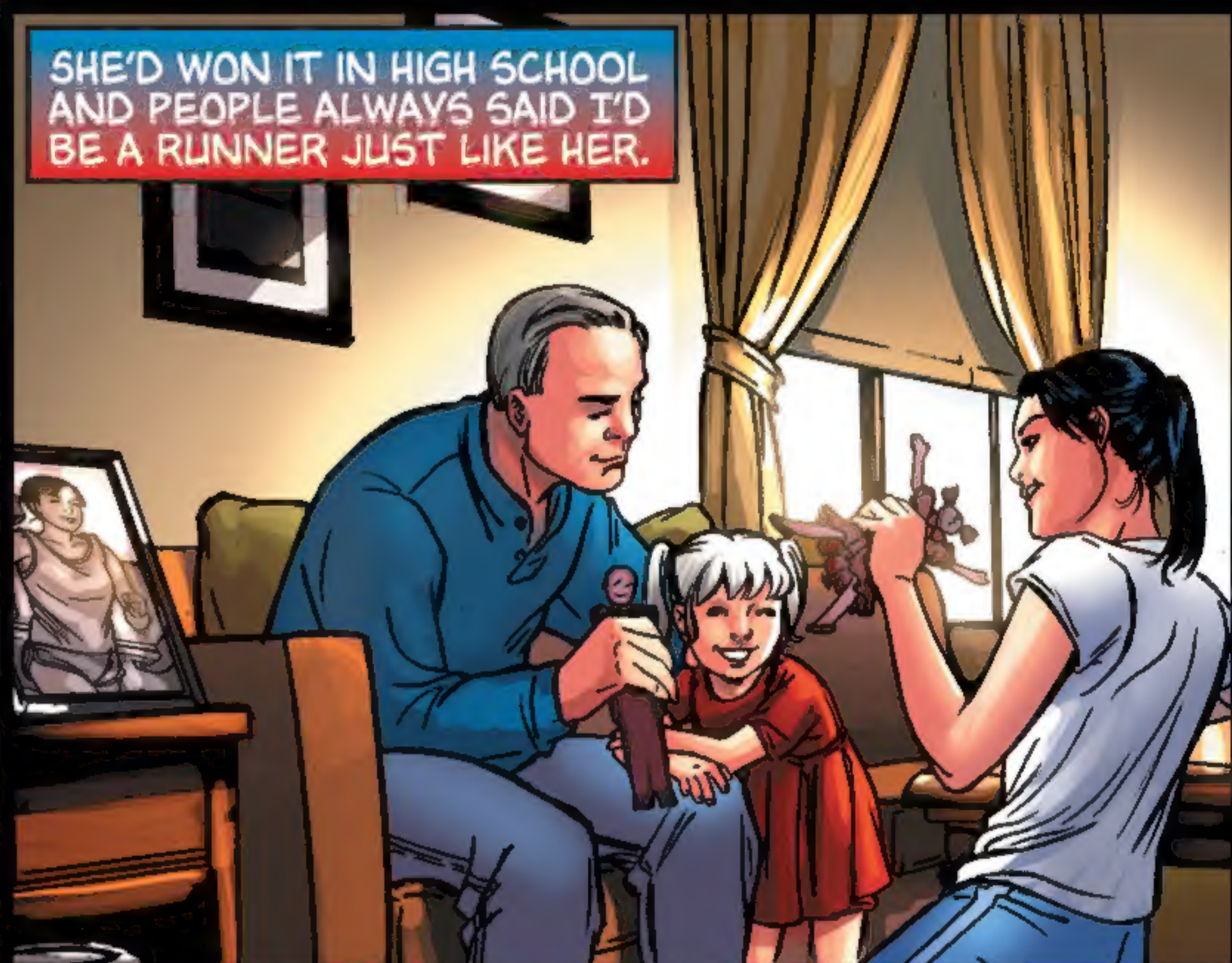


25 YEARS
EARLIER

MY EARLIEST MEMORY IS
OF WALKING WITH MY MOM
THROUGH OUR CORNFIELD,
CARRYING HER MEDAL.



SHE'D WON IT IN HIGH SCHOOL
AND PEOPLE ALWAYS SAID I'D
BE A RUNNER JUST LIKE HER.

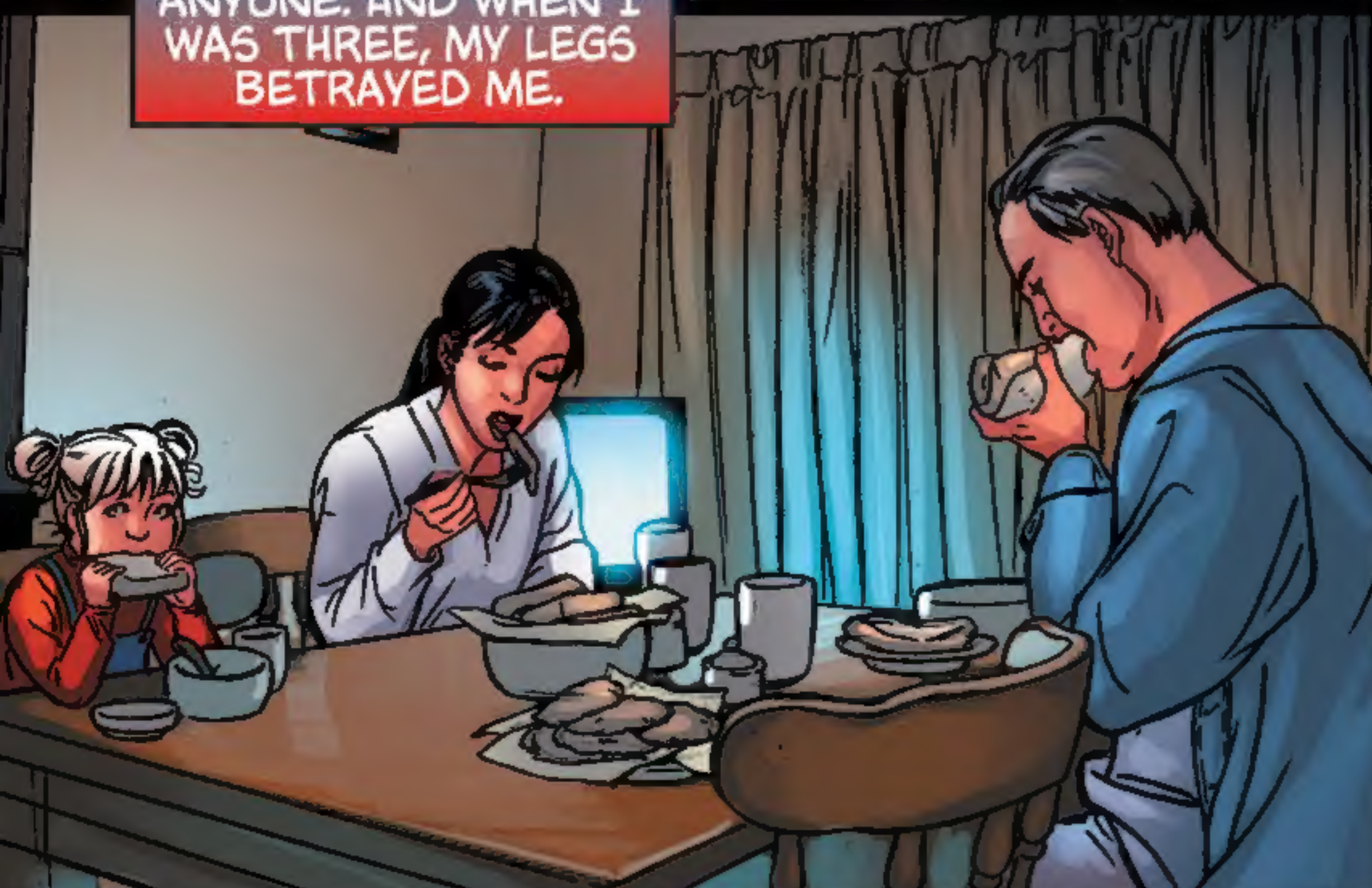


24 YEARS LATER

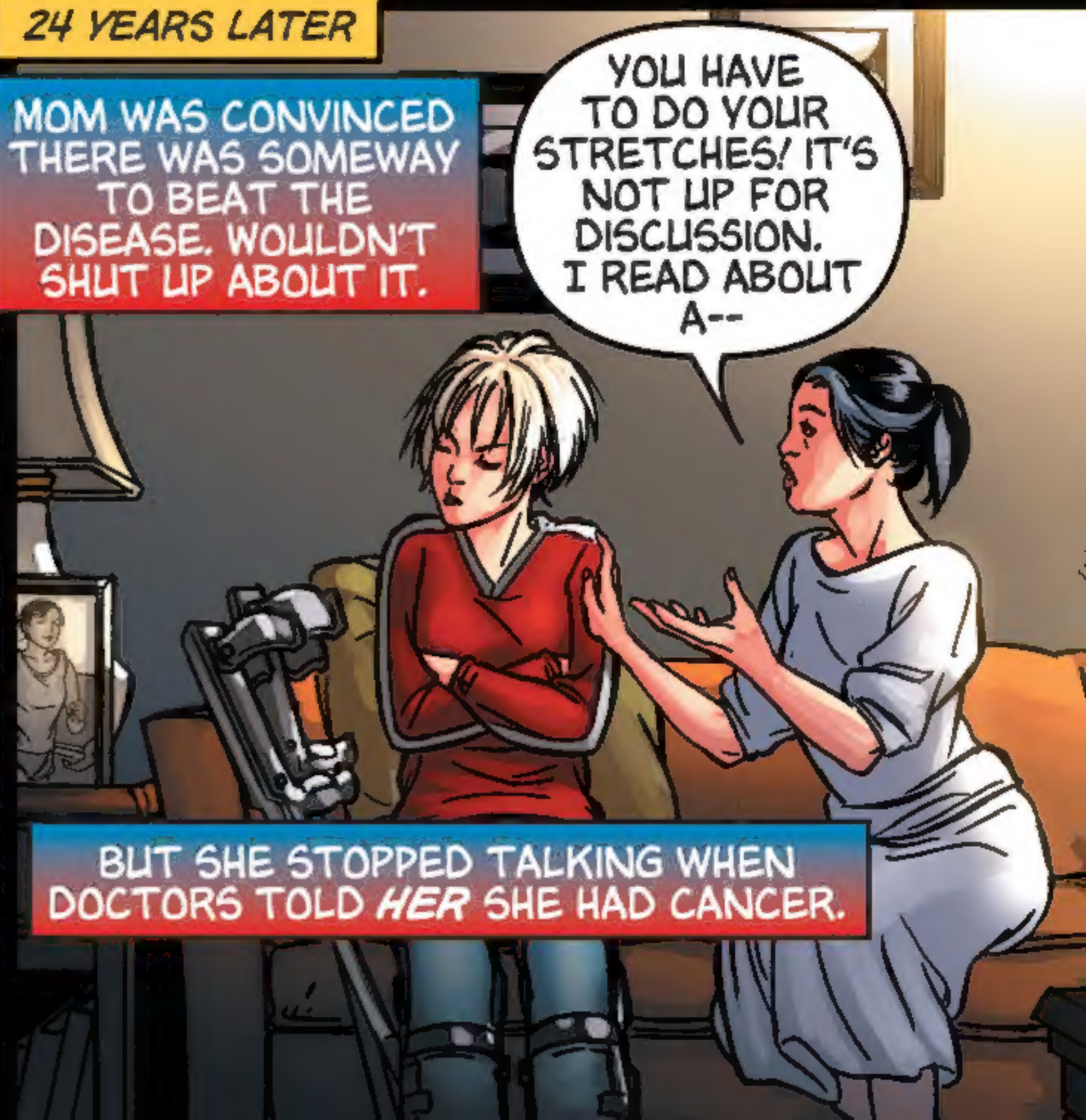
MOM WAS CONVINCED
THERE WAS SOMEWAY
TO BEAT THE
DISEASE. WOULDN'T
SHUT UP ABOUT IT.

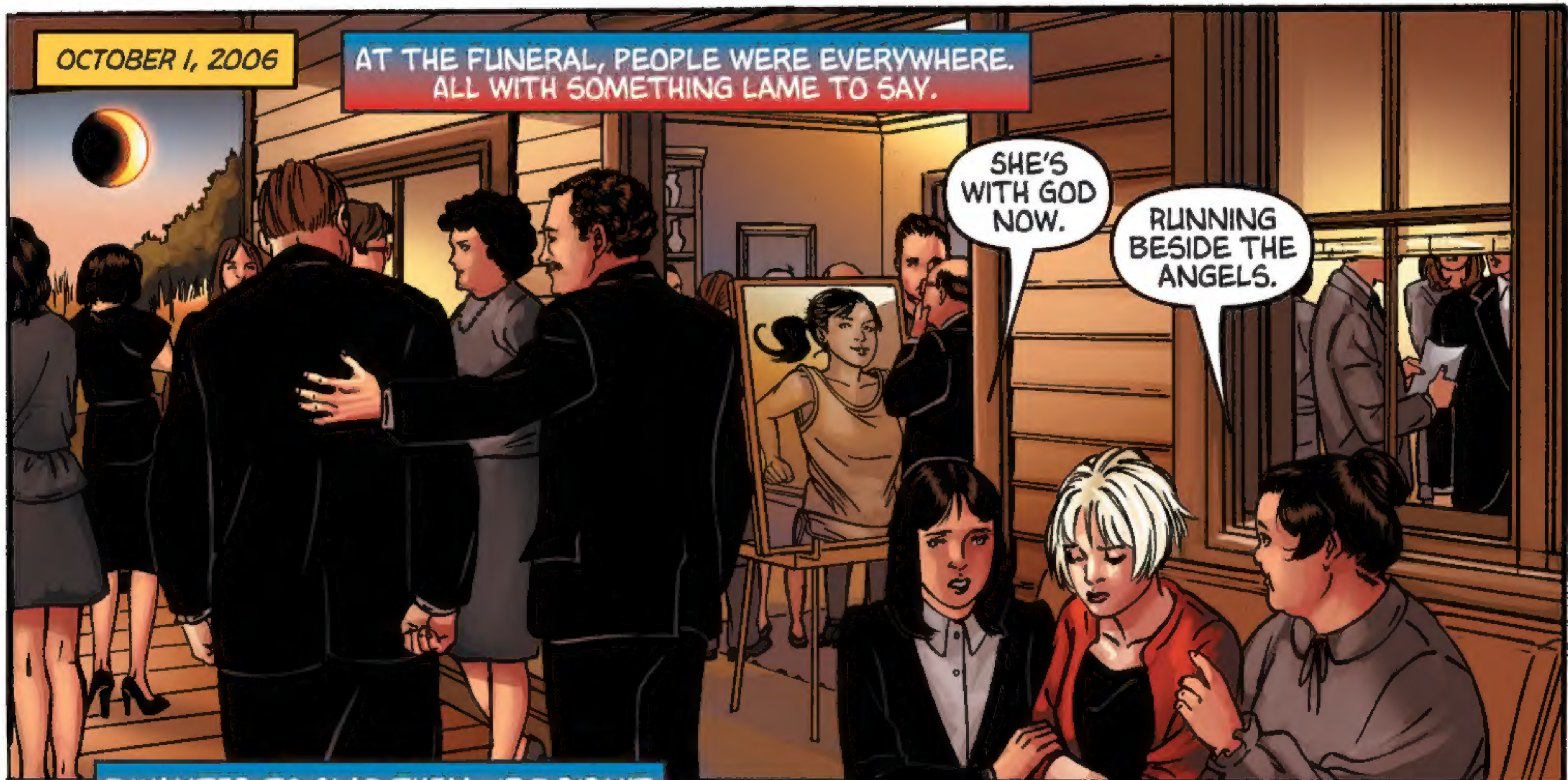
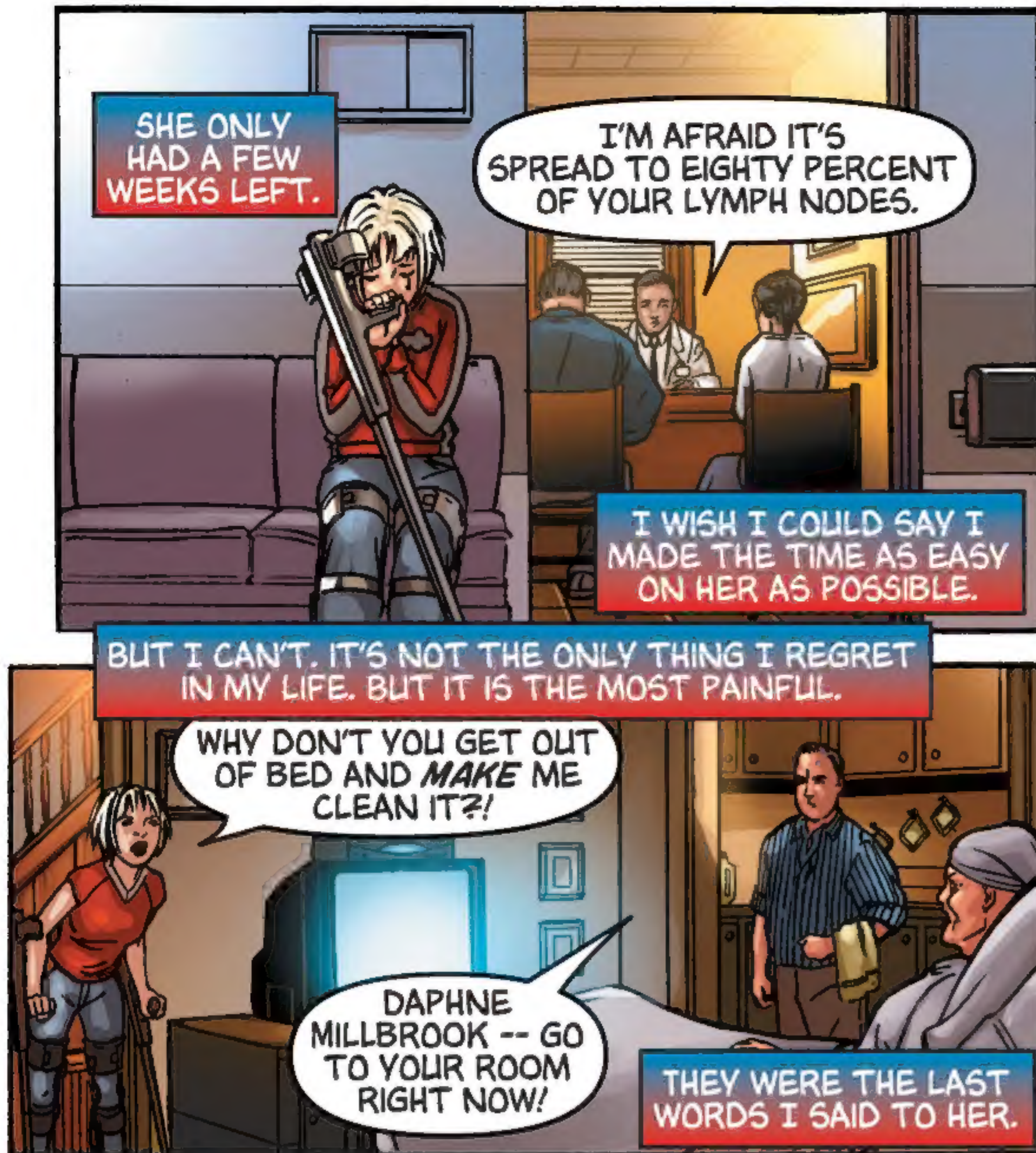
YOU HAVE
TO DO YOUR
STRETCHES! IT'S
NOT UP FOR
DISCUSSION.
I READ ABOUT
A--

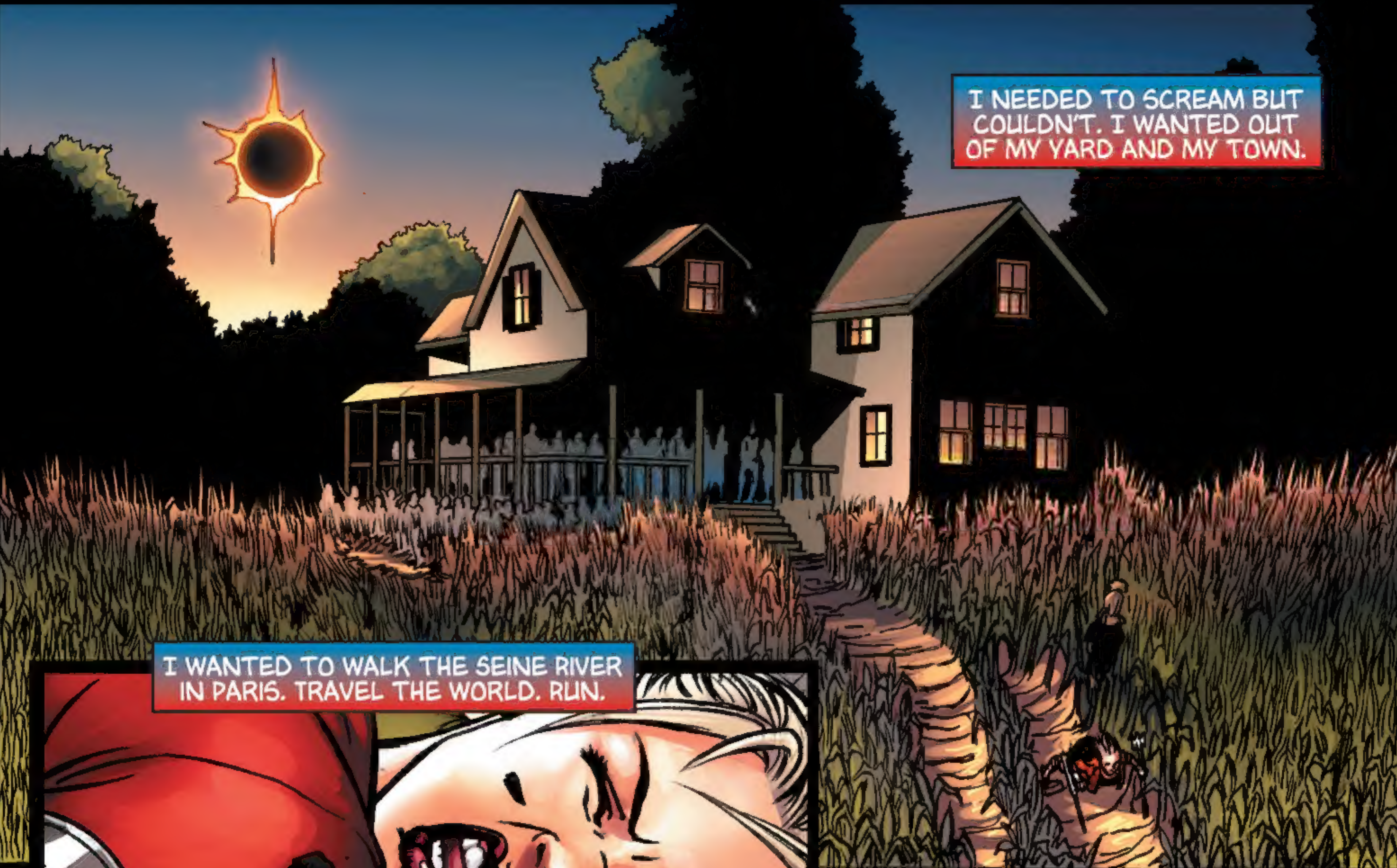
BUT YOU CAN'T TRUST
ANYONE. AND WHEN I
WAS THREE, MY LEGS
BETRAYED ME.



BUT SHE STOPPED TALKING WHEN
DOCTORS TOLD *HER* SHE HAD CANCER.





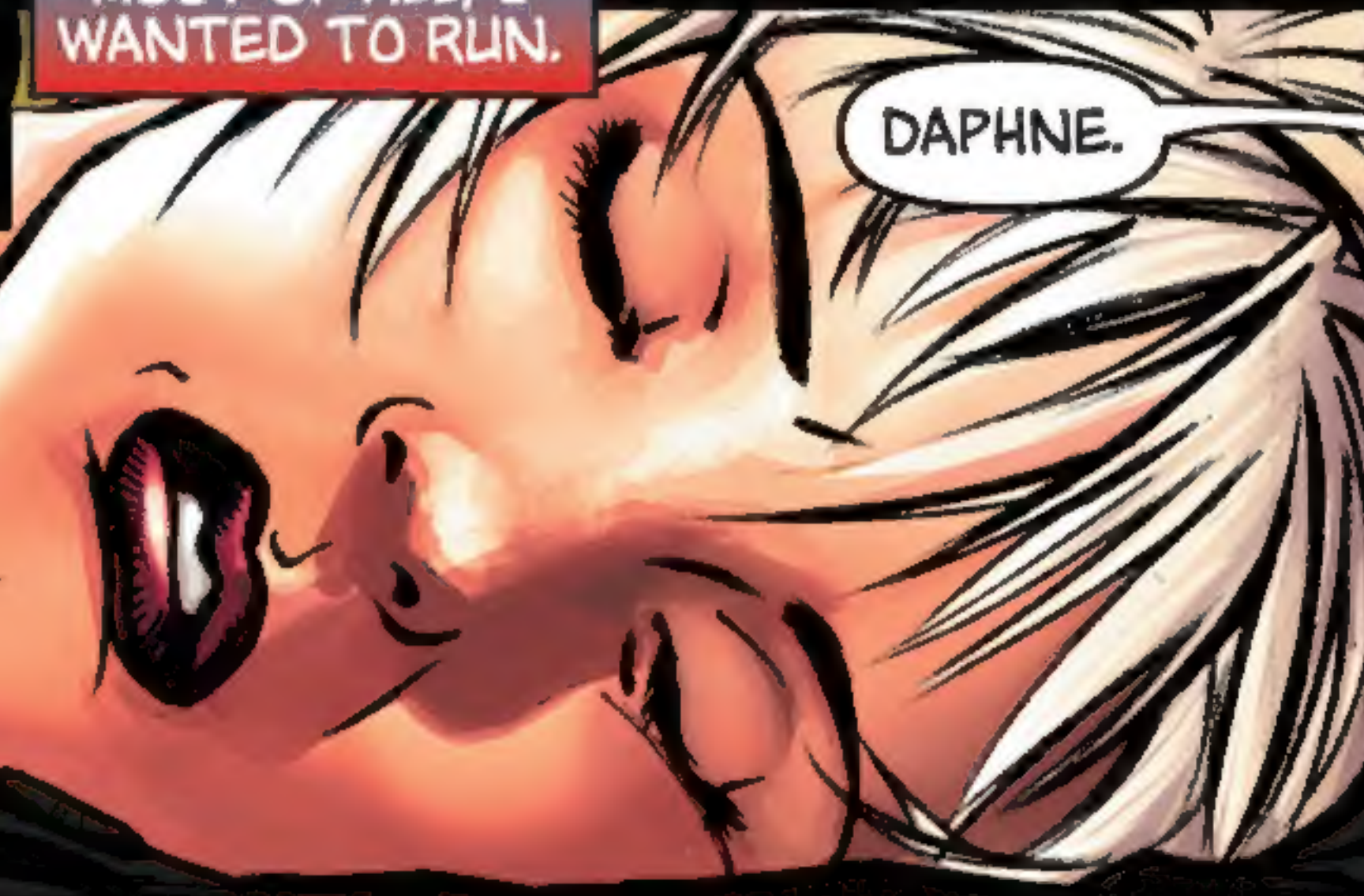


I NEEDED TO SCREAM BUT
COULDN'T. I WANTED OUT
OF MY YARD AND MY TOWN.

I WANTED TO WALK THE SEINE RIVER
IN PARIS. TRAVEL THE WORLD. RUN.



MOST OF ALL, I
WANTED TO RUN.



DAPHNE.



MOM?

MY SWEET BIRD,
IT'S TIME TO STOP
LIVING LIKE YOU'LL
NEVER AMOUNT TO
ANYTHING.

IT WAS A CONVERSATION
WE'D HAD SO MANY TIMES.



I'M A CRIPPLE, REMEMBER?
I'LL NEVER BE WHAT
YOU WERE --

YOU'RE
WRONG. YOU'RE
SPECIAL.

I'M NOT.

DON'T LET
THOSE BRACES HOLD
YOU BACK. YOU'LL
LEAVE THIS CAGE AND
NEVER LOOK BACK.
STAND UP!





MEMORIES. THE PAST. ONLY
THIS TIME, I ACTUALLY
HEARD HER WORDS.



BECAUSE I WAS TIRED OF
THE CAGE. I WANTED TO
FEEL THE WIND ON MY FACE.

SO I DROPPED THE BRACES.
I RAN TOWARDS A NEW LIFE.

OH. MY.
GOD.



AND I DON'T EVER
REGRET THAT.

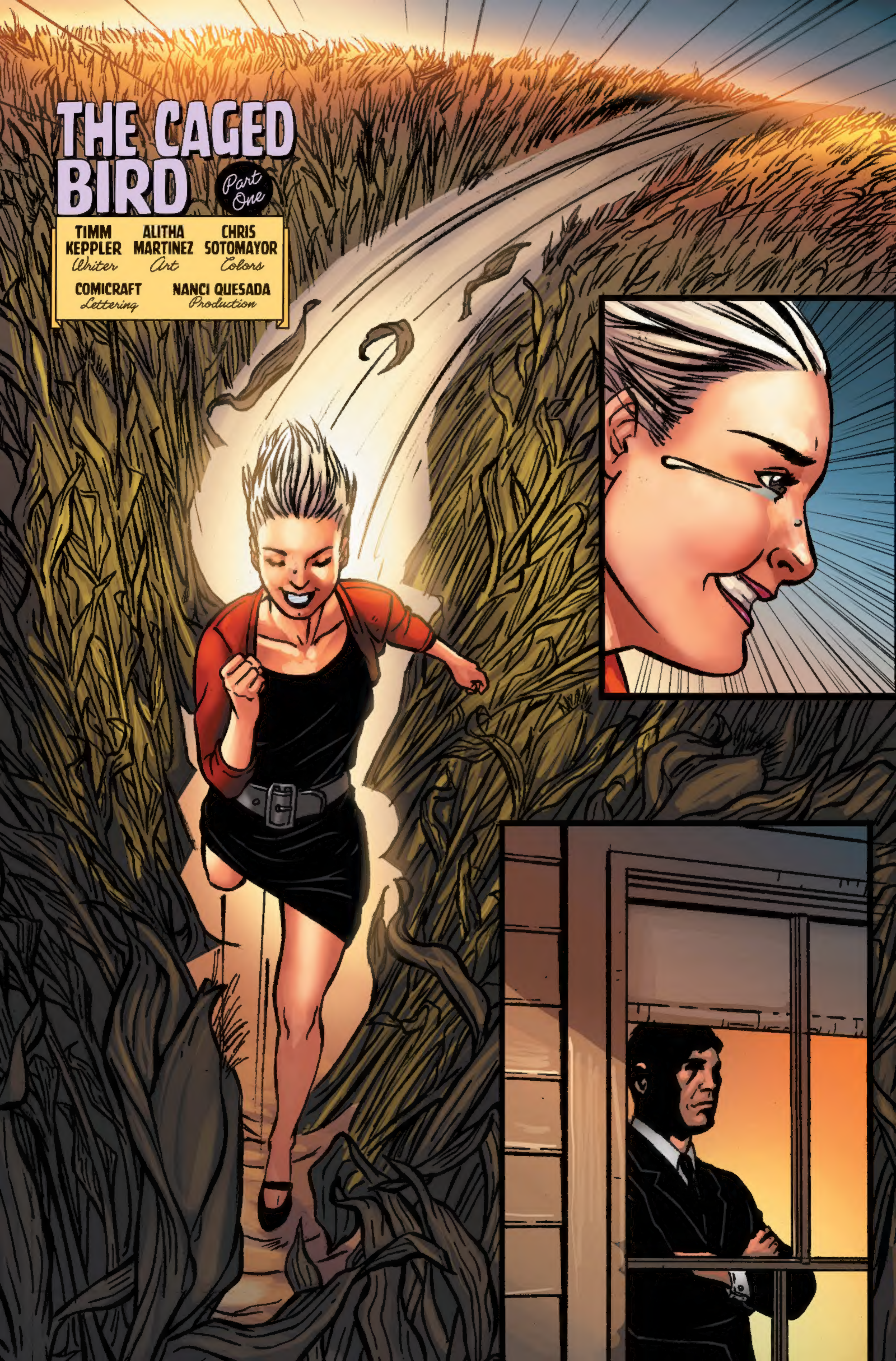
WOOOO!



THE CAGED BIRD

Part One

TIMM KEPPLER	ALITHA MARTINEZ	CHRIS SOTOMAYOR
<i>Writer</i>	<i>Art</i>	<i>Colors</i>
COMICRAFT	NANCI QUESADA	
<i>Lettering</i>	<i>Production</i>	



BUT I DO REGRET WHAT
HAPPENED THAT NIGHT.

SNAP

WHERE'VE
YA BEEN THE
LAST FOUR
HOURS?

I CAN
EXPLAIN.

I CAN'T
LOSE YOU, DAPHNE.
YOU'RE ALL I
HAVE LEFT.

DAD,
PLEASE. TURN
AROUND.

I CAN WALK.
RUN EVEN.

I DON'T
KNOW HOW,
BUT...

AREN'T YOU
GOING TO SAY
ANYTHING?

I WISH YOUR
MOTHER WERE
HERE TO SEE
THIS.

**KNOCK
KNOCK**

I SHOULD HAVE
GRABBED HIM RIGHT
THEN AND RUN.

HI FOLKS,
I'M SORRY
TO BOTHER
YOU.

YES,
WHAT
IS IT?

BUT HOW WAS I
TO KNOW WHAT
WOULD HAPPEN?

I WAS HERE EARLIER FOR
YOUR WIFE'S SERVICES.
I'M TERRIBLY SORRY
FOR YOUR LOSS.

IT WAS ONLY LATER I
LEARNED. TRUST NO ONE.

THE NAME'S THOMPSON.
I'D LIKE TO TALK TO
YOU ABOUT YOUR
DAUGHTER.

TO BE CONTINUED...